

# Munitions Response Committee Temporarily Abandoned

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The Munitions Response Committee (MRC) is a group made up of representatives from the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), the military services, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), state regulatory agencies, and other stakeholders in the munitions response process. The MRC was established several years ago following the collapse of the Range Rule. The goal of the MRC was to continue the dialogue between the Department of Defense (DoD) and the regulatory community over munitions response and UXO related issues. MRC participants discuss various issues and share their views, perspectives, and positions on munitions response related topics such as clean up authorities, the use of open burn open detonation, and long term management of UXO sites. As consensus was reached on a topic, a white paper was drafted to document the results. In theory, the completed white papers would then be used by both sides as they drafted their respective policy and guidance documents related to munitions response. The goal of the process was to avoid miscommunications or pitfalls in the field that have plagued UXO cleanup projects in the past. In past years, disagreements between regulators and DoD at UXO sites have resulted in large cost over runs and extensive schedule delays as both sides argued over authorities, roles, and responsibilities.

Some of the MRC members participated through an organization known as the Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials (ASTSWMO). ASTSWMO participants would often use [Defense & State Memorandum of Agreement \(DSMOA\)](#) funding to participate in the MRC meetings. DSMOA funding is basically a financial assistance program for states to participate in the Federal cleanup process at DoD installations. DSOMA funds are used for expenses such as direct salary costs, program support costs, and agency indirect costs. Despite the use of DSMOA funding for several years, a recent review of the DSMOA program managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) resulted in a decision that ASTSWMO was in-eligible for funding. This resulted in ASTSWMO quickly pulling out of the MRC. In response to ASTSWMO's decision to pull out of the MRC, other members including the EPA have decided to pull out as well thus abandoning the committee like a discarded military munition (DMM) ready to explode.

It is disappointing to find out that some organizations refuse to participate in a partnership program designed to move the munitions response process forward unless they are paid to do so. Hopefully the funding issue can be resolved in a timely manner so that the group can resume chipping away at progress. It is interesting to note that DoD has yet to issue a Directive on Munitions Response and for the most part, the Services' programs seem to be progressing forward without many problems.

Download the [DSOMA Policy Guidance](#) from UXOinfo.com.